

smoking, gambling, watching a dirty movie, dressing immodestly in public or any other ungodly activity, respectfully decline. Be loyal first to God, then to your spouse. Stand your ground. If you give in, your testimony will be marred.

- 3) **Salvation is of the Lord.** YOU cannot win your spouse, but God wants to use your godly testimony.
- 4) Remember what God said in the verse we just read in 1Peter. God can win your spouse **without** your preaching. Constantly mentioning God may make your spouse bitter.
- 5) Pray, pray, pray!
- 6) Wait confidently on the Lord. Did Joseph, Esther and Eunice eventually win their spouses to the Lord? We do not know, but they did live their faith before them.

b. **Seek to lead your children to Christ**

- 1) Joseph so influenced his two boys spiritually that they became leaders of two of the tribes of Israel.
- 2) Eunice's son Timothy because a great preacher. Paul, commended Eunice's influence on Timothy saying, (2 Timothy 3:15) "*And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.*"
- 3) The last phrase of our text states, "*else were your children unclean; but now are they holy.*" Ironside comments, "And your children are sanctified because they have a father or a mother, as the case may be, to take them to God in prayer and to teach them the Word of God, and you can count on Him to bless that ministry to them by bringing them eventually to Christ."

Conclusion: Being married to an unbeliever is certainly **not the best** option, but if you find yourself in that situation, God wants you to **take advantage of the opportunities he gives you**. Depend on God! Glorify God. Testify for God. It will not be easy, but you can do it.

If you are not married to an unbeliever, pray fervently for those who are. We must uphold them and encourage them in their difficult task.

Song: His Way with Thee - 367

Married to an Unbeliever

26 September 2021 AM – 1 Corinthians 7:14 – Marriage – Scott Childs

Introduction: God clearly warns Christians not to marry unbelievers. (2 Corinthians 6:14-15) "*Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?*" Marriage is definitely a yoke! However, some Christians marry unbelievers anyway. At times, two unbelievers are married and one of them later trusts Christ. Also, a Christian may be married to a professing Christian who is living like an unbeliever. What is a Christian married to an unbeliever to do?

I can think of four examples of believers in the Bible who were married to unbelievers. **Joseph** married Asenath, the daughter of an Egyptian priest. **Hosea** married a woman who was extremely unfaithful. **Esther** married Ahasuerus, a pagan king of Persia. **Eunice**, Timothy's mother, was married to an unbelieving Greek. These examples give us valuable tips that can help us today.

God had the Apostle Paul address the difficulty of a Christian being married to an unbeliever. Read **1Corinthians 7:13-14**.

Whether you have an unbelieving spouse, a spouse that claims to be a Christian but is not living it, or a godly spouse, you can learn from God's word on this topic. If you are not married, take notes to help your friends who are married.

Transition: This morning, I want to show you three ways in which a marriage to an unbeliever is an opportunity that God can use.

1. **It is an Opportunity to Depend on God**

a. **It will be a difficult challenge**

- 1) Hosea's wife was unfaithful. Esther had nothing in common with her husband/king, and he often ignored her for weeks at a time (Est 4:11).
- 2) A godly Christian lacks harmony with an unbeliever on many key issues. We saw this in 2Co 6:14-15 (above).

b. **Gain your strength from the Lord**

- 1) Stay close to God. (Psalms 91:1) "*He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the*

shadow of the Almighty."

- 2) Let the Lord strengthen you. (Ephesians 6:10) "*Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.*"
- 3) Build a love for the Bible. (Psalms 119:97) "*O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day.*"
- 4) Claim God's promises. (Isaiah 40:28-29) "*Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding. He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength.*" Meditate on the Psalms (e.g., Ps 23; 27; 42; 56; 73; 86; 94).
- 5) Stand alone for the Lord as Joseph, Esther and Eunice did. With God's help, you can do it.
- 6) Find your peace and comfort in the Lord. (Psalms 94:19) "*In the multitude of my thoughts within me thy comforts delight my soul.*"

📖 *Being married to an unbeliever is never easy, but if used as an opportunity to depend on God, it will be much easier and God will become more precious to you.*

2. It is an Opportunity to Glorify God

a. Glorify God by fulfilling your God-given role

- 1) God defines your marriage role in Ephesians 5. (Ephesians 5:22) "*Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.*" (Ephesians 5:25) "*Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;*" (Ephesians 5:33) "*Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband.*"
- 2) These roles are **difficult** if your spouse is a **godly Christian**, but they are **intensely difficult** if you are married to an **unbeliever**. Yet, with God's help, you can do it. Even when your spouse fails his or her role, you must fulfil your role unilaterally. **You glorify God when you fulfil your marriage role.**
- 3) Hosea sacrificially loved his unfaithful wife and even took her back after she had been unfaithful to him.
- 4) Esther remained submissive and loving to her husband in

the midst of loneliness.

- 5) Divorce is not God's answer. Do not seek to escape the marriage, (1 Corinthians 7:13) "*And the woman which hath an husband that believeth not, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him.*"

b. You glorify God by sanctifying your spouse.

- 1) Read our text again (1Co 7:14).
- 2) The Christian in the marriage sanctifies (i.e., sets apart) the unbeliever in the marriage. David Guzik accurately explains, "**Sanctified, in this context, does not mean that the unbelieving spouse is saved just by being married to a Christian. It simply means that they are set apart for a special working in their lives by the Holy Spirit, by virtue of being so close to someone who is a Christian.**" Harry Ironside adds, "[The husband] may be hard, he may be wicked, he may hate the very name of Jesus, but he has been brought outwardly into a new relationship with God through the conversion of his wife. There is now somebody in that home to pray, somebody who loves the Word of God, somebody to live the Christian life, and let the others see what it means to be regenerated."
- 3) If you will live a truly holy life before your unsaved spouse, God will use you for His glory.
- 4) With God's help, live so that your spouse cannot use you as an excuse for not trusting to Christ.

📖 *If you will truly sanctify your unbelieving spouse, you will glorify God.*

3. It is an Opportunity to Testify for God

a. Be a living testimony before your spouse

- 1) Let your Christian light shine. Peter wrote, (1 Peter 3:1-2) "*Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives; While they behold your chaste [clean] conversation coupled with fear [respect].*" Whether you are a wife or a husband, your unbelieving spouse is watching your way of life.
- 2) When your spouse wants you to participate in drinking,